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LETTER DATED 13 FEBRUARY 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TAJIKISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement issued on 12 February 1996 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Rashid ALIMOV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

[Original: Russian]

Statement issued on 12 February 1996 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan

The Republic of Tajikistan has consistently adhered to the policy of settling the inter-Tajik conflict through exclusively peaceful, political means and, in fulfilment of the hopes and aspirations of all citizens of Tajikistan for a comprehensive peace and calm in the country, is taking an active position at the inter-Tajik talks being held in Ashkhabad and is putting forward new and constructive proposals. Tajikistan is scrupulously observing the provisions of the Tehran Agreement on a Temporary Cease-fire and the Cessation of Other Hostile Acts on the Tajik-Afghan Border and within the Country, signed on 17 September 1994 by the Government and the Tajik opposition (see S/1994/1102, annex I).

However, in spite of the repeated statements issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan regarding the escalation of tension in a number of districts in the Pamir region as a result of the activities of armed bands of the Islamic opposition, the opposition continues to perpetrate acts of terrorism and sabotage not only against servicemen but also against civilians of Tajikistan.

Thus, according to a report issued by the Ministry of Security of Tajikistan, on 11 February 1996 at 1600 hours near the settlement of Sicharog, a band of 100 men - including mercenaries from foreign Islamic States - led by field commander Mullo Abdullo attacked a column of vehicles transporting food and fuels and lubricants intended primarily for civilians living in Gorny Badakhshan Autonomous Region. Taking advantage of the element of surprise, the bandits destroyed three vehicles, killing four civilians and wounding three; seven were taken hostage. In perpetrating this act of terrorism, the bandits made use of recoilless weapons, grenade throwers, machine-guns and other small arms.

In view of the fact that the armed formations of the irreconcilable Islamic opposition regularly commit acts of terrorism and sabotage, on instructions from the Government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan appeals to the international community and to all States that are not indifferent to the fate of the suffering Tajik people to draw the appropriate conclusions from these facts and condemn the acts not only of the irreconcilable Islamic opposition, which has adopted barbaric methods in its armed struggle against its own people, including civilians, but also those States which, overtly or indirectly, are providing material, financial and military assistance to the bandits.

In Tajikistan, we are confident that the attempts by the extremists of the irreconcilable Islamic opposition to exert pressure through the use of force, intimidation, terror and violence are useless and will not help it achieve its aims. In Dushanbe, we are inclined to consider all such acts as nothing other than Islamic opposition's policy of refusing to engage in constructive dialogue

and of completely undermining the inter-Tajik talks. In this regard, the Government of Tajikistan reaffirms its position of principle to settle all existing political differences through peaceful negotiations, and calls upon the Tajik opposition to fulfil the obligations it has assumed.